



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

## NOTES

### BENNO ERDMANN

Professor of Philosophy at the University of Berlin, and member of the Berlin Academy of Sciences, Geh. Reg.-Rat. Benno Erdmann died from an embolism on January 7, 1921, in his seventieth year. For two years his weakened heart had been a source of inconvenience, making the daily trips between the University of Berlin and his home in Grosslichterfelde an increased burden. Yet he remained in active service almost to the last, working with his accustomed zeal to within three days of his death.

Many Americans have felt the spell of his incomparable lectures. Not a few were trained simultaneously in the philosophical disciplines, in the methods of productive scholarship, and in the art of university instruction in his seminars. These latter have all felt something of the charm of his wise and infinitely patient friendship. Those who knew him in his lectures and his seminars will think of him first, I believe, as a great teacher. He lectured without notes. Yet the perfect form of his utterance made it comparatively easy for those who were still struggling with the German language to follow and understand. The logical sequence of his thought gave his lectures a naturalness and inevitableness that I have never heard equaled. They seemed unforgettable. The complete mastery of his material, his candor, enthusiasm, and magnetism combined to fill the larger lecture rooms, whether he lectured on Psychology, Logic, the History of Philosophy, or Education.

It was, however, in his seminars that we got our real insight into the extent and accuracy of his scholarship, our inspiration to productive thinking, and our training. The limitations of the lecture irked him. It offered no opportunity for real contact with the minds to which he spoke. He seemed to envy the relative informality of American class-rooms. It was in the freedom of the seminar that he brought out the best that was in each one of us to meet the great problems of life and thought. How often have I gone back to my room full to bursting with enthusiasm for solving the apparently all-important problems that we had just gathered the relevant data for understanding!

But of all those who called him teacher and friend I believe that I have most to be grateful for. It was a seminar problem in the technique of investigating the psychology of reading that started it. For more than two years we worked together almost every week-day for one or two hours in the diminutive Psychological Institute or at his home. It was in those hours of tireless work that I learned the sacredness of an experimental fact, the high obligations of a scientist, and the demands of scientific evidence. Few modern students have had the privilege of observing so intimately the operations of the mind of a master attacking a scientific problem.

Though he visited America once, to participate in the scientific discussions of the St. Louis Exposition, most American students knew Professor Erdmann only through his writings. They knew him consequently only as an accurate and profound scholar. It seems to me that scientific style never more completely hid the charm of personality than his. His first well-known, and probably still his best-known works in America were his studies of Kant's *Kritizismus*, and his edition of Kant's *Reflectionen* and *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*. It was these that took me to Halle. In

recent years one finds frequent reference to his *Logik*, the *Psychologische Untersuchungen über das Lesen*, and his reformulation of G. E. Erdmann's *Geschichte der Philosophie*. The latter was regarded by him as a work of *Pietät*, an interruption of his main tasks, though he was peculiarly fitted by temperament and training for its successful execution.

To an unusual degree he followed through, and embodied in his published works, his concept of philosophy as the universal scientific conditions of reality. Before his death he had completed most of the separate investigations that seemed to belong to the whole. Only the second part of his *Logik* is conspicuously lacking. That probably exists in manuscript and, as many of us hope, may yet appear.

At the center of his scientific interests stood a psychologically conditioned epistemology. His historical studies of the conditions and inner development of the Critical Philosophy of Kant, his *Logik*, the St. Louis lecture on the causal problem, and the numerous studies of the thought-processes and their interrelation with language, including our study of reading, appear in retrospect as successive steps in the intensive study of the various phases of a central problem, whose presentation in a single unit was never published if it was ever written. I think he feared the psychological dangers of system-building. The nearest approach to a unitary presentation appears in his *Wissenschaftliche Hypothesen über Leib und Seele*. It may be classified as a thoroughgoing phenomenalist parallelism.

Aside from the works already mentioned, one should include in the list of constructive special studies his too little known *Zur Theorie der Apperception*, the *Zur Theorie der Beobachtung*, *Die psychologischen Grundlagen der Beziehungen zwischen Sprechen und Denken*, all three published in the *Archiv für systematische Philosophie*; the *Umriss zur Psychologie des Denkens* in Sigwart's *Festschrift*; and the recent *Grundzüge der Reproduktionspsychologie*.

A bibliography of his numerous papers, *Festreden*, and editorial work lies beyond the scope of the present notice. But it would be materially incomplete if it failed to give a glimpse of the wonderfully kind, great-hearted, unaffected personality that bound his pupils with ties of deepest affection. Though his guest both in Bonn and in Berlin, I knew him most intimately in Halle. There he permitted me to accompany him on some of his errands of mercy that I suppose were utterly unsuspected by any of his colleagues, unless possibly by the inseparable Breslauer group, Pischel and Eduard Meyer. His personal interest in the members of his seminars and their affairs was evidenced by innumerable incidents. The American stranger found a real home open to him, and a real home-welcome, in which the entire family participated. Three Christmas Eves I was invited to the sacred family festival, not as an onlooker but as participant, with my own little table of gifts, *Wurst*, and Christmas cake. I shall never forget the beauty of his face as the pungent odour of spruce needles, fired by the artful placing of the candles, revived memories of his childhood as only odours can. A revelation of his interest in my physical welfare came one unforgettable Easter when he decided that his laboratory assistant was over-fatigued, and led him into the Harz mountains, quietly regulating the stopping-places by his knowledge of my meagre resources. It was a strange coincidence that I broke the long and mutually painful silence which was necessitated by the war on January 7th, the day he died. Perhaps the finest indication of his personality and of his practical philosophy was the tender and profoundly significant question that he asked his wife only a few hours before his death: "Knowest thou how to distinguish between the physiological and the psychological?"

RAYMOND DODGE

Wesleyan University